

NSC BRIEFING

21 November 1957

BERLIN SITUATION

- I. Since East German currency reform on 13 October, Pankow regime (with Soviet backing) has become more aggressive in its attempts to control access to Berlin, limit inter-sector travel within city, and thus to weaken Western position in Berlin.
 - A. Stringent controls (document checks, body searches) have been imposed on Berlin intersector traffic, for purpose of reducing flow of new currency to West, and curtailing number of refugees fleeing East Germany.
 - B. Regime has begun harassment and threats against West German business houses in Berlin to force them to end support of propaganda and resistance activities.
 - C. Soviets have supported East German claims to air sovereignty over territory of GDR, including air corridors.
 - D. In addition, East Germans are known to want authority to issue visas to Allied personnel traveling to Berlin, function now exercised by Soviets.
 1. Western retaliation against East German travelers in West would be met by ban on all transit traffic--including freight--between Federal Republic and West Berlin except that of diplomats and military personnel.
- II. Other retaliatory measures available to West are limited; furthermore Federal Republic reluctant although some leaders now feel⁸ that retaliation is absolutely necessary.

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